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STATE FOR PM ERUSSELL, MMARKOFF
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TAGS: PGOV PINR KCIP TINT PTER EFIN ECPS KTFN EAIR
ELTN, IN
SUBJECT: PRODUCTIVE PREP TALKS POINT TO A SUCCESSFUL
JANUARY CYBERSECURITY EXCHANGE

REF: NEW DELHI 9249
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¶1. (SBU) Summary: A well-organized and highly motivated
National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) Information
Security Specialist and head of the National Information
Security Coordination Cell Commander Mukesh Saini met on
December 20 with PM/PPA Deputy Coordinator for International
Critical Infrastructure Protection Policy Erica Russell to
block out the agenda for the January 16-17, 2006,
Cybersecurity Forum in New Delhi. MEA Director (Americas)
Gaitri Kumar also attended but offered no substantial inputs.
 In 90 minutes Saini and Russell reviewed the status and
expected progress of the five working groups (WGs), discussed
GOI proposals for additional WGs to address transportation
and financial sector issues, and fleshed out GOI thinking on
additional structures to advance the cybersecurity
relationship (joint training, a joint operations fund, and a
statement of principles.) The discussion was later joined by
PolCouns and NSCS Joint Secretary Arvind Gupta; all sides
reported satisfaction with the meeting and predict a
productive exchange in January. End Summary.

Where We Are, Where We're Going

¶2. (SBU) Saini described the US-India cybersecurity
relationship as evolving in the right direction: "The first
plenary (in 2002) was a political statement, the second (in

2004) was getting to know each other and grasping the subject and its contours. Now, the third (January 2006) should be moving into exchanges of experts, documents, and technology."
 He recalled that the Cybersecurity Forum predates the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) WG and the High Technology Cooperative Group (HTCG). Russell reported that the WG co-chairs found the bilateral workshops and seminars held from April-September 2005 to be very useful, and that the USG interlocutors look forward to the January plenary.

Structure for the January Plenary

¶3. (SBU) Saini and Russell agreed that the Cybersecurity Forum would convene at Vigyan Bhawan (a large, modern, GOI-owned conference facility in central Delhi), which reflects the priority New Delhi attaches to this exchange. The group would meet in plenary on January 16; NSA Narayanan or D/NSA Nambiar will provide the opening address, followed by opening remarks from the GOI and USG delegation heads. For January 17, the WGs would meet for the first half of the day, and report their progress at the plenary's conclusion. Russell and Saini agreed that the focus of presentations should be on the way ahead, not on recapping past accomplishments.

Three WGs Ready to Go

¶4. (SBU) Russell passed Saini a list from Anthony

Teelucksingh of DOJ's Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section outlining the topics DOJ wants to cover in January, and relayed that Teelucksingh was pleased with the progress to date. Saini responded that the list of topics appears to meet GOI's expectations.

¶5. (SBU) Russell told Saini that DHS Director for International Affairs and Public Policy (National Cybersecurity Division) Liesyl Franz and a US-CERT technical expert would attend in January. She added that Franz had difficulty contacting the Indian co-chair for the Watch & Warning/Critical Infrastructure Protection WG, but the two were now coordinating for the plenary.

¶6. (SBU) Saini reported "reasonably good progress" from the Standards & Software Assurance WG (which he proposed, and Russell agreed, to rename "Standards & Assurances WG"). Russell told Saini that WG co-chair Dr. Ron Ross of NIST's Computer Security Division could not attend the January Forum, but a DOC colleague -- Dan Hurley of NTIA -- who is well versed in Ross's portfolio would fill in.

R&D WG on Hold but Long-Term Health Assured

¶7. (SBU) Russell reported that there was no immediate successor to R&D co-chair Dr. Stan Riveles to attend the plenary, but a PM/PPA detailee, Dr. Bruce Averill, would come on board in early 2006 with the responsibility to revive the WG and to implement measurable initiatives with his counterpart. Saini was pleased that Riveles' replacement would have a two-year tenure. (NOTE: Saini's one abiding concern in recent months has been that frequent turnover in the GOI and USG would retard progress, forcing meetings to be postponed and the WGs to have to constantly get to know each other repeatedly. End Note.)

Industry-Industry Dialogue, "Offshoring the Offshoring"
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¶8. (SBU) Saini and Russell agreed on the importance of increasing industry's role, with Saini highlighting that industry is where the innovation lies, and Russell noting

that US industry owns and operates most of the country's
critical infrastructure. Russell asked Saini if the topic of
data protection in "offshoring the offshoring" (Indian BPOs
farming out their business to third-country firms) would be
too sensitive to include during the plenary, or if it should
be discussed in private. Saini readily suggested having an
Indian BPO firm speak on the topic during the plenary, and
Gupta later seconded the approval. Saini requested a
presentation on the role of the USG in Industry Sector
Advisory Committees (ISACs).

GOI Proposals for Financial, Transport WGs Moving Slowly
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¶9. (SBU) Saini outlined that the GOI's proposed Financial
Sector WG would address both securing legitimate financial

transactions and tracking illicit finances (Reftel). Russell
offered support for the proposal and is making the case to
relevant USG agencies, but lining up appropriate partners is
a slow process. Saini admitted he was having the same
difficulty enlisting the Finance Ministry. The two agreed to
invite US Treasury and Finance Ministry to the plenary as an
educational exercise, and to work toward a Financial Sector
WG later in 2006. (NOTE: US Treasury asked to meet with
PM/PPA before the end of December to discuss possible
participation in the Forum and international cyber security
and CIP engagements in general. Russell will advise of the
outcome of these discussions afterwards. End Note.)

¶10. (SBU) Saini acknowledged to Russell that the GOI had the
greater need for transportation sector cybersecurity
assistance. Both agreed that, as US-India direct air links
expand, the importance of securing airline passenger and
cargo data grows rapidly; however, Saini nodded to the
enormous volume of Indian rail traffic that presents in his
view a more likely target for a cyber attack. "Imagine if
our national railway reservation system were locked for just
one hour, the result would be chaos," he predicted. Saini
stated the Railways Ministry is beginning to stand up a CERT,
but he doubted if either it or Civil Aviation Ministry could
actively participate in the January Forum. Saini and Russell
agreed to encourage government and corporate transportation
stakeholders to attend the plenary and the GOI-proposed
January 20-21 seminar on Cybersecurity in the Civil Aviation
Sector (Reftel) with an eye to forming a WG later in 2006.
(NOTE: Upon return to D.C., Russell advised that she now has
TSA contacts with whom she is discussing the administration's

SIPDIS
possible participation in the Forum and the subsequent GOI
proposed Civil Aviation workshop.)

GOI Joint Fund/Joint Institute Proposal: Looking for $$
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¶11. (SBU) Russell told Saini that her office has been unable
to locate funds in either the Department or DHS to support
the GOI proposal for a Cybersecurity Joint Fund (Reftel), but
they are still looking. Saini suggested the two sides first
agree to the concept, and secure funds (at a 50-50 split)
further down the road. He explained that the fund would help
protect cybersecurity travel and training from the budget
cycle. Russell replied that she would have an answer on
conceptual agreement by January. On the Joint Institute,
Saini reported that he would formally present a proposal
after he fully clears the concept within the GOI.

Something to Sign, Seal and Deliver

¶12. (SBU) To Saini's request to enshrine our cybersecurity
relationship in an agreement or protocol as a post-Forum
deliverable, Russell suggested a declaration of principles --
which creates no new obligations, retains flexibility, and

would be much faster to clear through the inter-agency process than a Letter of Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding. Saini agreed to draft such a declaration.

Subsequent discussions with PolCouns and Gupta indicated the desire to announce the declaration during POTUS's upcoming visit in early 2006.

January Follow-Up: NSCS Doing its Homework

¶13. (SBU) In a January 5 follow-up conversation, Gupta informed PolCouns that the WG co-chairs would complete their draft agendas in the next 1-2 days. He expects 8-10 Indian participants for each WG, and requests that the US side field at least 3-4 to ensure productive exchanges. Characterizing the forthcoming event as an "open forum with a large GOI and industry presence," Gupta queried PolCouns to ensure a sizable delegation to represent US industry. A draft of the proposed POTUS deliverable should also be ready before the plenary opens, to allow the USG side sufficient time to consider the language.

Comment: Cooperation at the Speed of Thought

¶14. (SBU) It is clear that this relationship is progressing well and shows excellent potential for further growth. In many respects the only drags on the cybersecurity relationship are the constraints of money and bodies. The NSCS and most of the WGs are firmly on board, if not leading the way, and Saini and Gupta appear willing to push any lagging GOI elements to maintain the momentum. Saini's expansion plans for sector-specific interactions are generally of mutual interest, and he freely admits where Indian interests outweigh USG's (as in railways security). It is also noteworthy that NSCS clearly has the pen on this issue, with MEA along for the ride -- the Foreign Ministry simply does not have the expertise on this topic, although they are supporting it as best they can. The GOI is focusing on what is achievable, and is for now avoiding USG redlines (such as steganography) to avoid any bottlenecks. All signs point to mutually beneficial progress continuing in this area of our relationship.
BLAKE